

## Message Text

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ACTION ARA-10

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 9518

INFO AMEMBASSY PANAMA IMMEDIATE

C O N F I D E N T I A L USUN 4052

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, UNGA, PN, US

SUBJECT: GOVERNOR SCRANTON'S MEETING WITH PANAMANIAN FOREIGN  
MINISTER

REF: STATE 241331

1. ON SEPTEMBER 29, PANAMANIAN FOREIGN MINISTER BOYD AND  
PERMREP ILLUECA CALLED ON GOVERNOR SCRANTON AND MISOFFS AT BOYD'S  
REQUEST. BOYD SAID THAT THE SITUATION IN PANAMA WAS DETRIORATING  
RAPIDLY. REFERRING TO RECENT DEMONSTRATIONS, HE SAID THEY BEGAN  
WITH STUDENTS DEMONSTRATING AGAINST THE INCREASING COST OF LIVING,  
PARTIALLY THE RESULT OF A PROLONGED BROUGHT. HE SAID THAT IN  
ADDITION TO THE STUDENTS, OTHER PEOPLE "TRIED TO FISH IN TROUBLED  
WATERS." HE THEN REFERRED TO THE THREE "AMERICANS" ARRESTED  
SAYING THAT THEY WERE ALL EMPLOYEES OF US GOVERNMENT AGENCIES.  
BOYD SAID THAT HE HAD SEEN TELEVISION COVERAGE OF THE  
DEMONSTRATIONS IN WHICH OVER 1,000 PEOPLE PARTICIPATED. HE  
ESTIMATED THAT AT LEAST 30 AMERICANS HAD PARTICIPATED IN THE  
DEMONSTRATIONS.

2. GOVERNOR SCRANTON ASKED WHAT THE POINT OF US PARTICIPATION  
IN THE DEMONSTRATIONS COULD BE. BOYD REPLIED THAT THE ZONIANS,  
SEEING THE NEW TREATY ON THE HORIZON, ARE TRYING TO PROVOKE  
INCIDENTS. BOYD ALSO COMPLAINED ABOUT SOUTH COMMAND NETWORK'S  
(SCN'S) PERIODIC ANNOUNCEMENTS DURING THE DEMONSTRATIONS  
DETAILING DAMAGE AND WARNING AGAINST GOING INTO PANAMA CITY.

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BOYD SAID THIS INCREASED THE MOMENTUM OF THE DEMONSTRATIONS.

3. IN RESPONSE TO GOVERNOR SCRANTON'S EXPRESSION OF DISMAY AT THE REPORT OF BOYD'S ALLEGATION THAT PRESIDENT FORD WAS SEEKING A NEW MAYAGUEZ INCIDENT IN PANAMA, BOYD SAID THAT HE HAD BEEN INACCURATELY QUOTED. ACCORDING TO BOYD, HE TOLD THE WASHINGTON POST REPORTER THAT HE WOULD NOT BE SURPRISED IF "REAGANITES AND ZONIANS" WERE LOOKING FOR AN INCIDENT AND HAD NOT REFERRED TO PRESIDENT FORD. GOVERNOR SCRANTON EMPHASIZED THE NEED TO KEEP OUR HEADS.

4. BOYD STRONGLY RECOMMENDED THAT AMBASSADOR BUNKER BE SENT BACK TO PANAMA TO RESUME NEGOTIATIONS. HE SAID THAT IF NEGOTIATIONS ARE NOT RESUMED PRIOR TO THE ELECTIONS, HE FORESEES A LONGER DELAY THAN CONDITIONS IN PANAMA WILL PERMIT. IF THE PRESIDENT IS NOT RE-ELECTED HE NO DOUBT WILL TELL THE PANAMANIAN TO WAIT TO TALK TO CARTER. CARTER WILL NEED TIME TO ORGANIZE HIS ADMINISTRATION AND DECIDE HIS POSITION ON THE NEGOTIATIONS.

5. BOYD SAID HE IS PRESENTLY INSCRIBED TO MAKE HIS GENERAL DEBATE STATEMENT ON THE AFTERNOON ON MONDAY, OCTOBER 4, BUT IS CONSIDERING DELAYING HIS STATEMENT (BY EXCHANGING TIMES WITH TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO, TENTATIVELY SCHEDULED FOR FRIDAY MORNING, OCTOBER 8) BECAUSE OF THREE FACTORS: HIS UPCOMING BILATERAL WITH THE SECRETARY (TENTATIVELY OCT 7), THE FORD/CARTER DEBATE (OCT 6), AND THE SECRETARY'S LUNCH FOR THE LATIN AMERICAN FOREIGN MINISTERS (OCT 7). GOVERNOR SCRANTON AGREED WITH BOYD THAT IT WOULD BE USEFUL TO POSTPONE HIS STATEMENT UNTIL AFTER THOSE EVENTS.

GOVERNOR SCRANTON EMPHASIZED THAT ANY ACRIMONIOUS DEBATE ON THE CANAL NEGOTIATIONS IN THE UN WOULD SERVE NO ONE.

6. GOVERNOR SCRANTON, EMPHASIZING HIS COMMITMENT TO SUCCESSFULLY NEGOTIATING A NEW TREATY, SAID THAT HE HAD RECENTLY SPOKEN TO THE PRESIDENT, THE SECRETARY, GENERAL SCOWCROFT AND AMBASSADOR BUNKER, URGING THE RESUMPTION OF NEGOTIATIONS. HE ADDED, HOWEVER, THAT EVEN IF IT WERE POSSIBLE TO RESUME NEGOTIATIONS NOW, THE ISSUE OF DURATION SHOULD NOT BE CONSIDERED UNTIL AFTER THE ELECTIONS. BOYD REPLIED THAT HE IS AWARE THAT NO FIRM COMMITMENT ON DURATION WILL BE POSSIBLE UNTIL AFTER

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ELECTIONS AND IS WILLING TO ACCEPT AN "OPEN AGENDA" WHICH WOULD ENABLE HIM TO TELL THE PEOPLE OF PANAMA THAT DURATION IS BEING DISCUSSED. GOVERNOR SCRANTON POINTED OUT THE DIFFICULTIES THAT SUCH A COURSE WOULD CAUSE US.

7. BOYD INFORMED GOVERNOR SCRANTON THAT IN A RECENT CONVERSATION WITH GENERAL TORRIJOS, THE GENERAL SUGGESTED THAT AS A TOKEN OF GOOD FAITH, THE "AMERICANS" IMPRISONED DURING THE

DEMONSTRATIONS BE RELEASED. ILLUECA SUGGESTED THAT WE MIGHT BE ABLE TO QUIET DOWN THE ZONIANS. ILLUECA ALSO POINTED OUT THAT A RECENT VOA BROADCAST REPORTED A STATEMENT BY CARTER FAVORING NEGOTIATIONS. GOVERNOR SCRANTON ASKED AGAIN THAT NO MORE "MACHISMO-Z TYPE STATEMENTS BE MADE AS THESE POSE GRAVE DIFFICULTIES FOR US.

8. IN BOYD'S PRESENCE, GOVERNOR SCRANTON INSTRUCTED MISSION OFFICER TO DO EVERYING POSSIBLE TO ARRANGE THE BILATERAL BETWEEN BOYD AND THE SECRETARY FOR THE WEEK OF OCTOBER 4.

9. ACTION REQUESTED: USUN STRONGLY RECOMMENDS THAT THE BILATERAL ALREADY AGREED UPON BE HELD DURING THE WEEK OF OCTOBER 4. WE REQUEST THAT USUN BE INFORMED AS SOON AS POSSIBLE OF SCHEDULING OF THE BILATERAL.  
SCRANTON

NOTE BY OC/T: DISSEMINATION COORDINATED WITH S/S-O - MR. STEINER.

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